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Report of the Secretary-General

Addendum

Regional follow-up to world conferences and other global meetings

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I. Financing for development

1. As part of the preparations for the high-level International Conference on Financing for Development, to be held in Mexico in March 2002, the regional commissions organized five high-level regional consultative meetings to review those issues which are of direct relevance to their respective regions. These regional meetings were organized in cooperation with UNCTAD as well as with regional banks and other relevant institutions. They involved participation by the business community and civil society, including NGOs as well as substantive contributions, in some cases, from the IMF and the World Bank. The reports of these meetings, which highlighted the main conclusions or recommendations, were submitted to the Preparatory Committee for the High-level International Intergovernmental Event on Financing for Development at its second substantive session, held from 12 to 23 February 2001. In addition to presenting these reports to the Preparatory Committee, the Executive Secretaries also held informal briefings with the bureau and other delegations of the Committee. It is envisaged that the commissions will hold another round of consultations at an expert level in the second half of 2001, whose outcome would also feed into the global negotiations for the High-level International Conference.

Economic Commission for Europe

2. The Economic Commission for Europe regional high-level meeting was organized in collaboration with the European Bank for Reconstruction and UNCTAD, in Geneva on 6 and 7 December 2000. Some of the main conclusions of the meeting included the following: (a) the transition economies have large investment needs. Since the bulk of investments is generally financed internally, the creation of conditions to mobilize domestic resources is crucial; (b) financial assistance is a catalyst and not a substitute for domestic effort and conditionality must be tailored to local circumstances; (c) developed countries should make every effort to raise their level of Official Development Assistance (ODA) to 0.7 per cent of gross national product (GNP) as soon as possible; (d) a major challenge for some transition economies is to raise the level of domestic savings; (e) social development is an important dimension of both welfare and human capital investment and therefore should be included in economic development policy-making; (f) for the economies of Eastern Europe, official external assistance is important to support the transition process and promote sustainable economic growth. Improvements are needed in the coordination of external aid both among donors and with domestic recipients. In addition, faster disbursement of financial aid is needed; and (g) more effective regional cooperation could improve the benefits of assistance.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

3. The ESCAP regional meeting was organized in collaboration with UNCTAD and the Asian Development Bank. It was hosted by the Government of Indonesia, in Jakarta from 2 to 5 August 2000. Under the topic on mobilization of domestic resources, conclusions included the need to support finance for small and medium-sized enterprises through venture capital funds and commercial credit reference agencies; and using provident funds, unit trust and postal saving systems to mobilize savings and finance investment, particularly for social development. Other conclusions under the topic on mobilization and management of external private flows included the need for regular monitoring of borrowers, lenders and maturities against a target portfolio of capital inflows; and changing the maturity structure of foreign capital through indirect restrictive measures such as taxation and reserve requirements, and using capital controls only in emergency situations. The meeting also considered issues under international financial architecture, and among its proposals was one for adopting transparency and disclosure initiatives for financial markets and their member institutions such as banks and high leveraged funds. The meeting made two proposals for enhancing regional cooperation and collaboration on money and finance. These were strengthening regional cooperation in line with the Chiang Mai Initiative of ASEAN+3, including inter-bank swap arrangements; and establishing an Asian monetary fund for preventing/managing the effects of financial crisis. For enhancing innovative sources of finance, the meeting considered expanding the use of information technologies in capital markets; and enhancing the use of structural finance and securitization techniques. For the effectiveness of the external sector, the meeting was of the view that focusing of ODA on the social sector and human resources would be an enhancing measure.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

4. The Commission organized its meeting in collaboration with the IDB. The Government of Colombia hosted the meeting in Bogota on 9 and 10 November 2000. Conclusions of the meeting included the following: (a) there is a need to create an environment that favours stable economic growth around 6 per cent per year. To reduce the vulnerability to international financial volatility, investment must be increasingly financed by domestic savings; (b) an efficient allocation of financial resources requires the development of domestic financial institutions and of macroeconomic policies that significantly reduce the risks associated with volatile external financing; (c) financial volatility can be reduced by a new international financial architecture which should, inter alia, include stronger regional and subregional financial institutions and trade integration; (d) the international community should work with the private sector to promote long-term financial flows, especially foreign direct investments to all developing countries and to facilitate market and institutional mechanisms that will make other types of private capital flows, especially credit, available to all developing countries; (e) financing by multilateral development banks will continue to be significant for such measures as mobilization of resources for less developed countries and high priority social projects; (f) ODA should be set at 0.7 per cent of developed countries' gross domestic product (GDP). ODA is important for global public goods with such strong externalities as peace, sustainable development and the fight against drugs.

Economic Commission for Africa

5. The ECA high-level meeting in collaboration with the OAU, the African Development Bank and UNCTAD was held from 15 to 17 November 2000 in Addis Ababa. The recommendations of the high-level meeting were presented to the eighth session of the Conference of African Ministers of Finance, held on 21 and 22 November 2000, which formed the basis of the Ministerial Statement on the Financing for Development. The Ministerial Declaration underscored the need to adopt policy measures to improve the mobilization of domestic and external resources in support of Africa's development. On the domestic side, the Declaration endorsed a subregional and regional approach to capital markets development in Africa; and on the external side, it called for renewed international financial cooperation and strengthened partnership to increase ODA flows, enhance the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative to benefit more countries, and allow wider access for African products to markets of developed countries. In addition, the Declaration underscored the need to enhance the coherence and consistency of the international monetary, financial and trading systems in support of Africa's development. Another significant outcome of the Ministerial Conference was the decision to develop the Compact for African Recovery.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

6. The ESCWA meeting was organized in collaboration with UNCTAD and the Arab Monetary Fund. The meeting arrived at a number of conclusions, which include the following: (a) resources for development should be more stable and measures should be taken to reduce the volatility of oil revenues which have been a main source of financing for development in the region; (b) the liberalization of labour markets could result in a redistribution of national income in favour of capital, at the same time, sentiments of injustice and social disturbances should be addressed; (c) maintaining a high level of resources for social development and increasing their return is necessary. Better health, education and training services are important for attracting investments and participation in development financing; (d) WTO agreement should be more sensitive to developing countries' needs and capacities and industrial countries should refrain from protectionism; (e) international financial resources for economic growth and social development. This is particularly important when sectors such as health care are suffering from impacts of economic reforms and liberalization; (f) greater transparency and disclosure of information are required from international financial institutions; (g) global surveillance of national policies is needed because increasing integration of financial markets raises the risk of contagion; and (h) creditors including the private sector should share the burden of diffusing financial crises. Orderly debt rescheduling and moratoria on servicing payments should be considered.

II. World Summit on Sustainable Development

Economic Commission for Europe

7. Regional ECE preparations for Rio+10, the World Summit on Sustainable Development, to be held in Johannesburg in 2002, comprise the report on the Regional Assessment of Progress, the Regional Preparatory Meeting and the development and adoption of a Declaration by the Regional Preparatory Meeting. Prepared in close cooperation with UNEP's Regional Office for Europe and with the contributions of international organizations, including UNDP, the European Commission, the OECD, the European Environment Agency and the Regional Environment Centres, the regional assessment of progress report focused both on developments in the region since the 1992 Rio Conference, challenges for the future and proposals for future policy priorities. The Regional Preparatory Meeting will be held on 24 and 25 September 2001, in the framework of a special session of the Commission. The role of the Preparatory Meeting will be to review the regional assessment report and to adopt a forward-looking political Declaration based on that report. Within this context, the assessment report and possible future commitments were discussed at a meeting of the bureau of the ECE Committee on Environmental Policy in April 2001, to which international organizations and NGOs active at the regional level in issues related to Agenda 21 were invited. A subsequent open-ended meeting for ECE member States and selected stakeholders has been scheduled for 12-13 July 2001 in Geneva, in order to focus on the content of the above-mentioned Declaration. It is expected that the Declaration, which will represent the key political part of the region's input to the Summit, will focus on key sustainable development issues which, in view of the region, require priority attention and action at the global level; issues which, in view of the region, could be more effectively addressed at the regional or subregional level, and specific proposals relating to regional and international institutions. The Declaration will also outline major strategic directions and policies for all ECE countries in order to address the key challenges related to sustainable development as they emerge from the assessment.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

8. The ESCAP Ministerial Conference on Environment and Development in Asia and the Pacific, held from 31 August to 5 September 2000 in Kitakyushu, Japan, adopted the Regional Message for the 10-year review of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Environment and Development, defining regional priorities. The Message will form the basis for a common regional vision that will constitute a major regional input to the World Summit.

9. To facilitate the development of a strong regional input to the Summit, a series of regional preparatory events will be organized through the collaborative efforts of ADB, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, ESCAP and UNEP. This will include subregional intergovernmental consultations, regional round tables, and a Regional Preparatory Committee, to be held in Cambodia in November 2001. One of the main objectives of this regional preparation will be the formulation of a regional "platform" which would outline key policy issues, priorities and follow-up actions based on regional assessments. Areas of focus for the platform may include key sustainable development issues that require priority attention and action at the global level; issues that could be more effectively addressed at the regional and subregional levels; and specific proposals from the region regarding strengthening or raising the effectiveness of international cooperation, including proposals regarding regional and international institutions. ESCAP would seek to identify projects in consultation with its member countries to implement the Regional Action Programme for Environmentally Sound and Sustainable Development, 2001-2005, adopted by the Ministerial Conference.

10. ESCAP is working with UNDP in organizing a Regional Forum for parliamentarians and civil society organizations aimed at securing the full involvement of civil society in the regional Rio+10 preparation process and the Rio+10 conference itself. The outcome of this Forum will be brought to the Rio+10 debate through sharing and reviewing of the experiences in the region-wide implementation of Agenda 21, particularly focusing on two key areas: the poverty/environment nexus and governance.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

11. ECLAC has joined efforts with the Department of Economic and Social Affairs and UNEP to organize the regional preparatory process in Latin America and the Caribbean for the World Summit on Sustainable Development, consisting of four subregional meetings, leading to a regional conference.

12. The first subregional meeting will be the one for the Southern Cone and Brazil, which will take place in Santiago, Chile, on 14 and 15 June 2001, while the one for the Caribbean will be held in Havana, Cuba, on 28 and 29 June 2001. The dates and site for the other two subregional meetings, the one for Central America and Mexico and the one for the Andean subregion, will be decided in close consultation with the countries involved and the relevant subregional institutions. In addition to these four subregional meetings, ECLAC, the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat and UNEP will organize a round table with civil society organizations, to be held in Barbados in July 2001.

13. Taking into consideration decision 8/1, paragraph (f), of the Commission on Sustainable Development,[1] based on Agenda 21 and endorsed by the General Assembly in its resolution 55/199 of 20 December 2000 — whereby the Commission invited the relevant organizations, agencies and programmes within and outside the United Nations system to support preparatory activities, in particular at the national and regional levels — ECLAC and UNEP carried out relevant consultations with the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean. As a result of these consultations, it was decided to convene the Regional Preparatory Meeting for the World Summit on 23-24 October 2001, in Rio de Janeiro, back to back with the Thirteenth Meeting of the Forum of Ministers of the Environment of Latin America and the Caribbean, to be held in Rio from 21 to 23 October.

14. ECLAC and UNEP are jointly preparing a document entitled "*Regional Evaluation of the Progress Reached in the Implementation of Agenda 21 and Platform of Action towards the Future*", to be presented at the Regional Conference.

Economic Commission for Africa

15. The African regional preparatory process for the World Summit on Sustainable Development commenced in January 2000 with the first multi-stakeholders' meeting, which was jointly organized by ECA and UNEP in Addis Ababa. The meeting set up an expanded Joint Secretariat to coordinate the preparatory process. The core members of the expanded Joint Secretariat include ECA, UNEP, OAU, ADB, UNDP/Capacity 21 Africa.

16. Two meetings of the expanded Joint Secretariat have been held — the first in Abidjan in June 2000, to outline a work plan; and the second in Dakar in March 2001 to finalize arrangements, including a provisional agenda for the subregional preparatory meetings. The meetings were organized in collaboration with relevant subregional organizations and institutions.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

17. ESCWA has been designated by the Council of Arab Ministers responsible for Environment as the regional coordinator for preparing for Rio+10, in partnership with the League of Arab States and UNEP. Preparatory activities in the region will mainly include: (a) an Arab regional thematic round-table meeting, convened by ESCWA in Beirut, from 9 to 13 April 2001, to elaborate concerted proposals and recommend innovative approaches for expediting progress in the implementation of selected priority themes in Agenda 21; and (b) a regional stakeholders' round-table meeting, which will be convened in Bahrain, from 23 to 27 September 2001, which will provide a platform for a multi-stakeholder dialogue. Other activities that are planned to take place in the region include special sessions and ministerial forums.

III. Special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the outcome of the United Nations Conference on Human Settlements (Habitat II)

Economic Commission for Europe

18. The Ministers of housing and spatial planning met in Geneva on 19 September 2000 under the

auspices of the ECE Committee on Human Settlements. They discussed and adopted the ECE Strategy for a Sustainable Quality of Life in Human Settlements in the Twenty-first Century and the Ministerial Declaration.

19. The Strategy, based on the provisions of the Habitat Agenda and Agenda 21, with particular emphasis on issues of common interest and concern for all countries of the ECE region, reflects five decades of cooperation within the ECE Committee on Human Settlements. It also reflects the views of Governments that living conditions and urban problems are multidimensional and should be considered in a broader context of economic and social development, environmental protection, peace and security.

20. To implement the Strategy, the Committee and ECE member countries will exercise the leadership necessary to unite different actors engaged in human settlements development. The Committee recommended cooperation between central Governments, local authorities, the business community and NGOs. To that end, the Committee will, among other things, strengthen its cooperation with the Housing and Urban Management Advisory Network, established in 1997 and which gathers experts from the private sector, NGOs and local authorities.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

21. To provide the regional inputs in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly (Istanbul+5), ESCAP organized a Regional High-Level Meeting for Asia and the Pacific, which was hosted by China in Hangzhou, in October 2000. That meeting noted that considerable progress had been made in achieving the two goals of the Habitat Agenda, namely, adequate shelter for all and sustainable human settlements in an urbanizing world, but that low levels of economic and technological development and inadequate international cooperation had hindered further achievements. It expressed the hope that Istanbul+5 would help the countries to achieve the goals of the Habitat Agenda.

22. The Regional High-Level Meeting recognized that shelter problems, rural-urban migration, urbanization, poverty alleviation and environmental problems were closely related, and that poverty alleviation was essential for sustainable development in urban and rural areas. It stressed that empowerment of local authorities and stakeholder participation in decision-making were critical to address shelter problems. It recognized the need to localize the Habitat Agenda and institutionalize its implementation through the establishment of Habitat committees at the national, subnational and municipal levels. It underlined the need for close collaboration between ESCAP and the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) in efforts to promote the sustainable development of urban and rural areas. The recommendations of the Hangzhou meeting were endorsed by the Commission at the fifty-seventh session.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

23. The Latin American and Caribbean Regional Preparatory Conference for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall appraisal of the implementation of Habitat Agenda was held at ECLAC headquarters in Santiago de Chile, from 25 to 27 October 2000. This preparatory conference was convened by the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and ECLAC in accordance with General Assembly resolution 53/180 of 15 December 1998.

24. The work was organized in plenary sessions, where documents and national reports were presented and general discussions carried out. Two panels were also held on two themes of the global campaigns of Habitat Agenda; urban governance and security of tenure. At the same time, a drafting group met to prepare the regional declaration, which would serve as the Latin America and Caribbean contribution to the special session of the General Assembly.

25. ECLAC presented a document entitled "From rapid urbanization to the consolidation of human settlements in Latin America and the Caribbean: regional perspective", in which various aspects of the territorial, urban and housing situation in the region were reviewed. The document stated that in the current context of globalization, characterized among other things by financial volatility and the development of new information and communication technologies, cities stood out as areas of social integration. To achieve such integration, it was important to take into account a series of factors, including the trends towards

segregation and segmentation caused by integration and the increase in the demand for housing at a time when public spending for that sector had declined. In addition to identifying the main challenges facing urban settlements, the ECLAC study stresses the need to adopt an integrated urban environment management system and to create organizations that offered real alternatives for intersectoral collaboration. The countries participating in the Regional Conference welcomed the document prepared by ECLAC.

26. The Regional Conference adopted the Santiago Declaration on Human Settlements.

Economic Commission for Africa

27. ECA, in collaboration with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) conducted a review of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda in Africa, by organizing the African Ministerial Conference on the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda, from 6 to 8 November 2000, in Addis Ababa. The objective of the conference was to review progress in the implementation of the Habitat Agenda and to adopt a regional common position for the special session of the General Assembly for an overall review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda. The regional conference was attended by various stakeholders, including African Governments, NGOs, intergovernmental organizations, United Nations agencies, as well as the International Union for Local Authorities (IULA), and the Municipal Development Programme. The conference adopted the Addis Ababa Declaration on Human Settlements in the New Millennium, which contained commitments on shelter policy, social development and poverty, environmental management, economic development, and governance.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

28. The high-level Arab meeting for follow-up to the implementation of the Habitat Agenda (Istanbul+5), (Manama, Bahrain, October 2000), was held in cooperation with the United Nations Centre for Human Settlements (Habitat) and the Ministry of Housing, Municipalities and Environment in Bahrain. The overall purpose of the Meeting was to assess the urban development trends in the Arab countries since the Istanbul conference in 1996 and to formulate an Arab strategy for dealing with urban challenges facing Arab cities at the threshold of the new millennium, in preparation for Istanbul+5. The two principal results of the Meeting were: (a) the adoption of the Basic Principles and Measures for the Implementation of the Habitat Agenda in the Arab Region, which had emanated from the draft strategy and takes into consideration the social, cultural and political considerations in the Arab region within the overall principles of the Habitat Agenda; and (b) the Manama Declaration, prepared by Habitat, and which consists of 14 recommendations that represent a reconfirmation of commitment to the principles of the Habitat Agenda. It also represents a commitment to the Habitat campaigns on security of tenure and good governance, which have recently been launched.

IV. Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

29. In preparation for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, which is scheduled to be held in Brussels in May 2001, the ESCAP secretariat conducted the Final Review of the Implementation of the Programme of Action for the 1990s. The Review identified key issues in finance for development, external trade, infrastructure development and social services in the least developed countries (LDCs) in South Asia, South-East Asia and the Pacific region, and proposed measures to address these issues.

30. The Regional High-level Preparatory Meeting for the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries was jointly organized by ESCAP and UNCTAD in collaboration with the Government of Bangladesh and UNDP in Dhaka from 13 to 15 November 2000. Various stakeholders from LDCs, as well as from international organizations and development partners considered the key issues identified in the regional review. It was noted that the economic and social progress in LDCs of the region had been rather modest during the past decade. Moreover, the progress achieved so far rests on the fragile foundations of a narrow economic base, an undiversified export structure and a high degree of vulnerability to external shocks. It was felt that universal access to basic education and health and equal opportunities are prerequisites for fostering

development. Improved infrastructure is another key input as it lowers the cost of production of goods and services, facilitates the flow of information and improves access to social services. Furthermore, to complement the trade liberalization and export promotion initiatives of the LDCs, international support was needed for export diversification, introduction of technology and strengthened supply capacity. Finally, financing for development from official and private sources was essential in order to fill in the gaps between investment needs and domestic savings, government expenditures and revenue, and between import requirements and export receipts.

31. The recommendations emanating from the Regional High-level Preparatory Meeting were endorsed by the Special Body on Least Developed and Landlocked Developing Countries at its fifth session, held in Bangkok on 20 and 21 February 2001, and will be presented as the regional input to the Programme of Action for the Least Developed Countries.

Economic Commission for Africa

32. As part of the preparation for the Third United Nations Conference on the Least Developed Countries, ECA convened a high-level regional consultative meeting in November 2000.

33. The meeting addressed seven thematic issues around which discussions at the forthcoming Conference will be focused: financing growth and development; international trade, commodities and services; measures to enhance productive capacities of LDCs; food security and sustainable natural resource management; human resource development and employment; social services delivery; and governance, peace and stability. The recommendations of this meeting were subsequently deliberated on by the Conference of African Ministers of Finance at their eighth session, held on 21 and 22 November 2000 in Addis Ababa. At the end of their meeting, the Ministers adopted a Declaration, in which they articulated a common position on the issues to be discussed in Brussels.

34. Taking into account the outcomes of similar regional meetings held in Addis Ababa (March 2000), Niamey (April 2000) in preparation for the Conference on LDCs, and the high-level regional consultative meeting, the Ministers called for a new approach to international development cooperation in support of the development of African LDCs. The Declaration noted that with 34 out of the world's 49 LDCs in Africa, urgent action is required to avoid further marginalization of these countries in a globalizing world economy. In this regard, the Declaration called for the adoption of special measures in the areas of trade, finance and development. In addition, the Declaration called on Africa's development partners to support the efforts of African countries by increasing the volume of ODA and FDI; enhancing the Heavily Indebted Poor Countries Debt Initiative to benefit all African LDCs; allowing wider and preferential access for LDCs products to markets of developed countries; and providing technical assistance in capacity-building to address supply-side constraints, including infrastructure and institutions.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

35. In February 2000, the Executive Secretary of ESCWA, accompanied by seven ESCWA technical experts, paid an official visit to the Republic of Yemen, the only LDC member of ESCWA, to discuss, among other things, preparing the paper on the national plan of action of Yemen to be submitted to the Third United Nations Conference on Least Developed Countries. A joint meeting was convened with the representatives of embassies and international donors accredited to the State.

36. An agreement between the representatives of the Government of Yemen, UNCTAD and ESCWA was concluded to convene two meetings in Sana'a during the period from 5 to 9 November 2000: the Symposium on International Trade and Investment Issues — WTO Accession; and the Brainstorming Meeting of Least Developed Countries.

37. During the second half of 2001, a study, entitled Review of Progress made by the Republic of Yemen in the Implementation of the New Programme of Action in the 1990s, will be prepared by ESCWA.

V. Special session of the General Assembly, entitled "Women 2000: gender equality, development and peace for the twenty-first century"

Economic Commission for Europe

38. As a direct follow-up to the agreed conclusions of the ECE Regional Meeting for Beijing+5, the Commission has carried out a number of activities aimed at creating an enabling social and business environment for women entrepreneurs. A round table on women's entrepreneurship was organized in Budapest in November 2000 as part of the third Summit of the Central European Initiative. An informal forum on the Internet — the ECE Network to Support Women's Entrepreneurship — has been newly launched for the purpose of facilitating discussion among women entrepreneurs, experts and policy makers, and to enhance women's entrepreneurship in countries of the region. In addition, the first Portrait Gallery of Excellent Women Entrepreneurs in Transition Economies has also been launched on ECE's Internet site. The aim of the portrait gallery is to raise awareness about women's entrepreneurship, and to provide lessons learned and inspiration from real life experience of successful women entrepreneurs in countries with economies in transition. It has already gathered more than 50 women entrepreneurs from 14 countries with economies in transition. The decision to create a Team of Specialists on Women's Entrepreneurship under the newly established Working Party on Industry and Enterprise Development will further extend these activities by providing forums for discussion of best practices and experience, policy advice and organization of workshops and seminars.

39. In terms of supporting gender mainstreaming in a specific sector, the workshop on gender statistics for policy monitoring and benchmarking (Italy, October 2000) provided an opportunity for participating countries to assess how suitable and relevant their gender statistics are, as a basis for policies and for monitoring progress, and to what extent the gender perspective has been incorporated into their national policies and programmes.

40. A Memorandum of Understanding was signed between ECE and United Nations Development Fund for Women, which established a framework for collaboration and coordination based on the comparative advantages of the two agencies. The MoU covers the following areas: development of new initiatives aimed at introducing a gender perspective into macroeconomic analyses, policies and practices; improving gender responsiveness of legal and regulatory frameworks in Central and Eastern Europe and the Commonwealth of Independent States, building upon the United Nations norms and standards and using the *Acquis Communautaire* (body of legislation of the European Communities) as one entry point; and providing support for the diversification of job and employment options for women in countries with economies in transition.

41. The second Regional Coordination Meeting for the ECE region, held in October 2000, established a focal group on gender and economy. The role of the focal group is to (a) share information; (b) carry out more in-depth discussion in selected areas to identify problems, policy response and best practices, and (c) improve coordination of United Nations activities, including, if relevant, through developing joined projects and programmes.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

42. As part of the regional preparatory process of the Global Review in June 2000, ESCAP organized the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action, from 26 to 29 October 1999. The Outcome Document updated the Platform for Action and in some areas strengthened it. It also included priorities identified in the regional preparatory meeting.

43. An Expert Group Meeting was held in Bangkok from 30 November to 1 December 2000 to strategize on the regional implementation of the Outcome Document of the Global Review of the Beijing Platform for Action. The Meeting was convened: (a) to distil regional dimensions of the Outcome Document; (b) to conduct a regional prioritization of the persistent issues, concerns and emerging challenges elaborated in the Outcome Document; and (c) to identify the modalities, measures and strategies that are relevant to the ESCAP region. The expert group meeting also provided further guidance to ESCAP, other United Nations agencies and organizations, and different stakeholders at the country level in strengthening the implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action. Although many issues are inter-linked, priority issues

identified at the meeting included: globalization; poverty reduction and economic participation; human rights of women and girls; women in power and decision-making; information and communication technology; HIV/AIDS; peace and conflict resolution; and women and environment.

44. The Thematic Working Group on Women's Empowerment and Gender Equality, established in October 2000, replaced the Regional Inter-Agency Committee for Asia and the Pacific Subcommittee on the Advancement of Women.

45. The Thematic Working Group serves to enable United Nations agencies and other related organizations to promote the empowerment of women and gender equality through: (a) exchange of information on ongoing and planned activities, aimed at minimizing duplication; (b) coordination and complementary activities; and (c) formulation and implementation of collaborative activities specifically to follow up on: the regional Jakarta Plan of Action (1994); the Beijing Platform for Action (1995); the High-level Intergovernmental Meeting to Review Regional Implementation of the Beijing Platform for Action (1999); and the global review of the Beijing Platform for Action at the special session of the General Assembly (2000).

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

46. In the aftermath of the VIII Regional Conference on Women in Latin America and the Caribbean (Lima, February 2000) and the special session of the General Assembly, ECLAC member States decided to hold an annual open-ended meeting to enable all member States of the Conference to participate and focus their attention on a particular substantive issue. The first of these sessions was held in September 2000 (Santiago, Chile) to consider progress in the region in relation to the use of gender indicators in policy-making, and participants asked that the next one be devoted to the analysis of issues of mainstreaming the gender perspective in development policies in member countries. These issues have also taken precedence in many of the follow-up activities of ECLAC, giving special importance to its project on the mainstreaming of a gender perspective in sectorial ministries. The successful conclusion of this project in several countries will be marked with the celebration of a Regional Seminar in June 2001 and the publication of various specific studies. As one of the externalities of the knowledge accumulated through the project, a methodology was designed after the earthquakes in El Salvador to help the disaster evaluation team to measure the loss of women's remunerations received in kind for work.

47. One other concern of the Commission has been the development of gender indicators for the follow-up and evaluation of the Platform for Action, the Consensus of Lima adopted by the VIII Regional Conference and the Declaration adopted at the special session, which will facilitate the countries' reporting process at the Beijing+10 special session. Most of its activities in this area are carried out through an inter-agency project aimed at facilitating the use of gender indicators in public policy-making, whose main objective is to strengthen institutional capacities for the use of such indicators in the formulation of public policies both in the United Nations system and its national counterparts in the countries. A major result of this project has been the launching on 8 March 2001 of a web site on the situation of women in Latin America and the Caribbean, where users have access to gender indicators and regional comparative tables on the situation of women and men in all countries — including 24 country profiles. The site has been conceived as a major source of information on gender issues in the region and provides access to regional databases on national mechanisms for gender equity as well as on projects and programmes on the advancement of women executed by organisms of the United Nations system in the region, in addition to a wide range of links on gender issues and information on the activities, meetings, documentation and projects of the ECLAC Women and Development Unit.

48. ECLAC is currently working on developing a theoretical framework on impact of the globalization on gender equity, insisting on the economic aspects of gender equity as part of economic and social rights. On this issue, particular mention must be made of the Ad Hoc Expert Group Meeting on Gender and Macroeconomic Policies in the Caribbean (Port of Spain, October 2000), organized by the ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean, which examined the impact of macroeconomic policies on the goals of gender and social equity and identified the areas for further empirical study. In addition, a project dealing with the impact of pension system reform on the gender gap in the region has been initiated. The

preparation of expert meetings and the related substantive documentation is also under way on the issues of gender and racial discrimination and the measurement of violence against women. Finally, special attention was given to the promotion of the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women and the Additional Protocol thereto, taking into account the very strong adhesion of Latin America and the Caribbean to both instruments.

Economic Commission for Africa

49. To help prepare the Governments of the African countries for the mid-decade global review of the Beijing Conference on Women, which was held in June 2000, ECA organized subregional follow-up meetings (between 1997 and 1999) for the five subregions of the continent, which culminated in the sixth African regional conference on women, held in Addis Ababa in November 1999.

50. The Conference provided a forum for reviewing experiences of African countries in designing and formulating gender-sensitive policies and programmes in the 12 priority areas identified by the Beijing Platform for Action. In addition, the Conference carried out an assessment of the institutional capacity and identified the achievements and constraints in incorporating gender concerns into national policies and programmes. To undertake this assessment, ECA received national reports from 48 African countries, as well as United Nations agencies and regional bodies, covering the 12 critical areas of concern to women identified in the Beijing Platform. These include poverty reduction; education; health; human rights; the role of women in decision-making; violence against women; women and the media; women and economic development; women and the environment; institutional mechanisms for the advancement of women; the role of women in conflict resolution and management; and the girl-child.

51. Foremost among the constraints identified by the Conference is the lack of gender-disaggregated data which makes it difficult to assess gender disparities and monitor the gender consequences of policies. To help address this problem, the ECA secretariat is providing technical support to member States in the collection and utilization of gender disaggregated data for policy design and national accounting and budgeting processes.

52. Other activities undertaken by ECA in support of the advancement of women were aimed, for example, at promoting the economic empowerment of women; and ensuring a gender perspective in the peace-making process in African conflicts.

53. Promoting entrepreneurship of women is an important means towards achieving their economic empowerment. The focus of ECA's work in this area during the period under review was to facilitate access by African women entrepreneurs to information, technology and markets. To this end, ECA prepared feasibility studies and provided support in the establishment of two subregional business development centres (in West and East Africa) to provide training, information and networking for African women entrepreneurs.

54. Women and children are by far the most affected by armed conflicts in Africa. Yet, when it comes to conflict resolution and peace-building, their voices are barely heard. To address this anomaly, ECA, together with other regional institutions have been working since the establishment of the African Women's Committee on Peace and Development in 1998 to ensure a gender dimension in all conflict resolution efforts on the continent, by establishing a coalition of African women working in the area of peace-building. In this context, ECA, in collaboration with the African Women's Committee and Femmes Solidarité Africa organized a conference in Abuja, Nigeria, in June 2000, to discuss ways of mainstreaming a gender perspective into the peace-building process, particularly as it relates to issues of HIV/AIDS, health and education in the refugee camps.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

55. ESCWA is beginning to harness the mass media for creating awareness among the public at large of 12 critical issues of concern for the advancement of women contained in the Beijing Platform for Action and in the Arab Plan of Action. Twelve weekly television series are planned, the first of which was launched in March 2001. ESCWA is also collaborating with the Johns Hopkins Communications Center for the production of television spots for the same purpose.

56. Furthermore, in response to the recommendation of the Platform for Action of Beijing+5 with respect to the development of national gender statistics

programmes in the Arab countries, ESCWA had initiated a pioneering project in 1997 for the development of national gender statistics programmes in the Arab countries aimed at building national capacities in the production, use and dissemination of gender statistics that would promote action and monitor changes for the benefit of women. To date, a total of 11 Arab countries have participated in this project. The project has made significant contributions towards bringing the issue of gender statistics to public attention and in placing it on the national agendas and work plans of member countries. As a result, several member countries have established special units in their respective statistical offices for this purpose and are issuing related publications. ESCWA is developing a gender statistics database drawing on data received from member countries. It would consolidate all data on women and men in one application that would be made available for public use and for relevant gender-related research.

VI. Special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the World Summit for Social Development and further initiatives

Economic Commission for Europe

57. As a contribution to the regional follow-up to Copenhagen+5, ECE organized a Seminar on Benchmarking Social Development at the Geneva 2000 Forum, which took place during the special session of the General Assembly. Recognizing that social policies can neither be effectively monitored nor evaluated without the firm footing provided by statistics, the Seminar's objectives were to review and assess the progress made in the implementation of the statistical recommendations of the Social Summit at the national and international levels, and to promote the use of benchmarking techniques in social development policies. The Seminar concluded that benchmarking and monitoring play a key role in promoting the Summit goals and Programme of Action.

58. Several follow-up actions to the Seminar were proposed, notably the preparation of a Handbook on Benchmarking and Monitoring Social Development that would bring together expertise and identify best practices. Interregional cooperation in the form of organizing similar seminars in the other regional commissions and sharing the experience gained from the ECE Seminar was proposed. In addition, the meeting stressed the strategic role of ECE in follow-up to Summit decisions and in producing and disseminating data on social development for monitoring purposes. A first outcome of the Seminar has since been prepared, with support from UNDP, in the form of a special publication on "Statistics for Social Progress", which discusses the statistical implications of the framework for monitoring social development adopted at the 1995 Copenhagen World Summit.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

59. ESCAP continued to promote the strengthening and implementation of social policies and programmes towards the achievement of the three core goals of the Programme of Action of the World Summit on Social Development, namely, poverty alleviation, productive employment expansion and social integration, and the further initiatives on social development agreed upon at the Copenhagen+5 Review. The following regional mandates have served as policy guides to Governments: the Agenda for Action on Social Development in the ESCAP Region (adopted in 1994 and updated in 1997); the Agenda for Action of the Asian and Pacific Decade of Disabled Persons, 1993-2002; the 1999 Macau Declaration and Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific and 2000 Guidelines on the Implementation of the Macau Plan of Action; and the Jakarta Plan of Action on Human Resources Development, as revised in 1994. At the national level, policies and programmes were designed to accelerate the attainment of national goals and targets relating to the three core goals of the Social Summit.

60. In July 1999, ESCAP launched the ESCAP human resources development course for poverty alleviation, comprised of 11 modules. The objectives of the Course are: (1) to promote awareness among policy makers and senior officials of the latest social development thinking, concepts and practice; and (2) to enhance the knowledge and skills of programme managers in poverty alleviation project/programme design, implementation and evaluation. The first three Modules are designed for senior-level policy makers,

while the remaining eight Modules are targeted at programme/project managers.

61. ESCAP convened the Senior Officials' Meeting in November 1999, at which members and associate members reported on and assessed their respective experiences in trying to achieve the goals and targets of the Regional Agenda for Action, and formulated the Regional Perspective and Recommendations for the Global Review of the Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development by the General Assembly in 2000. ESCAP successfully implemented a regional project to develop national Social Development Management Information Systems (SOMIS) as a planning and monitoring tool for Governments in the implementation of the regional Agenda for Action on Social Development in general. ESCAP initiated a project on strengthening national policies and programmes on social safety nets in Indonesia, the Philippines, the Republic of Korea and Thailand. The ESCAP secretariat organized a regional seminar, in Bangkok in March 2000, on assessment and classification of adult offenders and juvenile delinquents and disseminated the issues and special measures identified and the recommendations adopted by the seminar.

62. ESCAP played a facilitator role for Governments, United Nations bodies and specialized agencies, intergovernmental organizations, NGOs and other segments of civil society to establish and strengthen partnerships or undertake collaborative action. In May 2000, ESCAP collaborated with Social Watch-Asia in organizing a Regional Consultation between NGOs and United Nations agencies concerned with social development in preparation for the Global Review Conference in Geneva in June 2000.

63. Meetings were held in Bangkok in 1999 and 2000 on targets, guidelines and awareness on issues relating to people with disabilities. The secretariat organized several pioneering technical cooperation activities, including the regional conference on accessible tourism for people with disability (Indonesia, September 2000); the regional training seminar on accessible public transport (China, November 2000); and the international symposium on policy issues concerning people with intellectual disability (Singapore, November 2000).

64. Information on activities relating to follow-up to the Social Summit and its review conference in 2000 has been disseminated through the *Social Development Newsletter*, the Internet and other new information technologies.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

65. ECLAC convened the Second Regional Conference in Follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development (Santiago, Chile, 15-17 May 2000) in order for member States to assess the progress made in fulfilling their commitments made in Copenhagen and to make preparations for their participation in the special session of the General Assembly on the implementation of the outcome of the Summit.

66. ECLAC presented to Governments a document entitled "The equity gap: A second assessment" (LC/G.2096), which provides an overview of the situation of the Latin American and Caribbean region in respect of the issues raised at the Summit and formulates proposals for action. The document stated that the region had made great strides towards reducing poverty, but had not been so successful in improving income distribution. As far as efforts to generate productive employment were concerned, unemployment had increased, and the informal sector had grown, while the income gap between skilled and unskilled workers had widened. Finally, in the area of social integration, there was some tension between consumption expectations and the actual possibility of satisfying them, and discrimination based on ethnic origin, violence, and mistrust of the court system persisted.

67. The main challenges facing the region were the following: to consolidate macroeconomic progress, especially by reducing inflation and maintaining fiscal equilibria; to apply production policies that included promotion of credit programmes, technological modernization, strengthening of ties among companies and more flexible working conditions; to develop combined social services systems that would allow for private participation without neglecting the fundamental responsibilities of the State, which could not be delegated, and improve educational curricula, in terms of quality and relevance, adjusting the educational supply to the labour market. With regard to health, pensions, and housing, the efficiency, coverage, and quality of services must be improved, synergies between the public and private system must be

promoted, and targeting of programmes must be fine tuned.

68. The Regional Conference adopted the Santiago Declaration in which government representatives noted that the Social Summit had contributed to the reinforcement of many of the social policies implemented in the countries of the region during the past five years. Reaffirming their commitment to work towards the implementation of the necessary measures to achieve the objectives established in the Copenhagen Declaration and the Programme of Action, they decided, inter alia, to strengthen programmes and public and private investments designed to combat poverty and ensure that they attain a suitable degree of complementarity and coordination; to design and implement integrated economic and social policies that will promote high-quality job creation and social protection as a preferred means of reducing poverty and vulnerability and of fostering greater social integration; and to strengthen the institutional capacity of the State and of authorities responsible for dealing with social issues and to achieve an appropriate allocation of resources with a view to ensuring that social development will constitute a State priority and attaining both an equitable form of growth and the economic development needed to make greater strides in the social sphere.

Economic Commission for Africa

69. Since 1995, ECA has undertaken a number of activities, including organizing subregional follow-up conferences, conducting analytical studies and providing advisory services to assist its member States to overcome the obstacles to accelerated growth in order to achieve the goals of the Social Summit.

70. The subregional follow-up meeting also paid particular attention to assessing progress in public spending on social sectors, with a view to identifying best practices and highlighting implementation problems and constraints. In addition, the meetings reviewed the state of governance as it affects the socio-political environments for attaining the objectives of the Social Summit.

71. Constraints highlighted by the various subregional follow-up conferences include acute lack of capacity for policy formulation, implementation and evaluations; lack of reliable statistical data and information to monitor progress in the implementation of agreed goals; lack of institutional capacity and financial resources; over-dependence on rain-fed agriculture; adverse impact on HIV/AIDS; the debt burden; and the persistence of internal and inter-state conflicts resulting from governance problems.

72. To help member States to address these challenges, ECA undertook a number of analytical studies that include the *Economic Report on Africa, 2000; Decline and slow economic growth of African countries; Growth strategies for Africa; Lessons from Asia and Latin America; Effectiveness of anti-poverty policies and programmes; Lessons and experiences; The gender characteristics of poverty with emphasis on the rural sector; Development finance requirements and broadened development agenda for Africa.* These studies were designed to promote better understanding of the poverty phenomenon in Africa and to help in formulating appropriate policies and programmes to eradicate it in the shortest feasible time.

73. Skills acquisition and human capital development are crucial to poverty reduction. Yet, Africa continues to lose its critical manpower and professionals through massive human capital flight resulting in brain drain that calls for urgent reversal measures. To help address this challenge, ECA organized a regional conference in Africa in February 2000, which examined various approaches in capacity-building and made practical recommendations for policies and strategies to reverse the trend.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

74. Regarding follow-up to the Copenhagen Declaration, ESCWA has carried out several interrelated and multidimensional activities to be implemented in phases. These activities emanate from the regional conference that ESCWA had convened on the follow-up to the World Summit for Social Development, held from 8 to 11 December 1998, in Beirut.

Poverty reduction

75. ESCWA is currently conducting analytical studies which address the issue of microcredit facilities as a means for alleviating poverty. These major studies, which started in 1994, aim at identifying major poverty indicators and policy measures for poverty eradication. The advisory services and technical assistance

provided by ESCWA have further helped in executing field projects, including a community development project in several of ESCWA countries, as well as carrying out a series of training courses on launching of small and medium-sized enterprises, as practical mechanisms for eradicating poverty. Also, as part of their poverty reduction priorities, ESCWA is the only organization in the region that since 1996, has provided a forecast in summary form, of the socio-economic developments in the region, and is aimed at assisting the policy makers by providing them with timely information and analysis.

Full employment policy

76. The ESCWA programme of work has been focusing on the social impact of globalization with particular reference to the labour market and employment as well as tools for alleviating poverty. The 21st ministerial biennial session of ESCWA, held in Beirut on 10 and 11 May 2001, concentrated on the need to strengthen and prepare the ESCWA countries to shoulder the challenges of globalization. The adopted resolution reflects the recommendations found in the ESCWA report, entitled "Social Impact of Restructuring with Special Reference to Employment" (E/ESCWA/SD/1999/4. The publication states that an increase in unemployment is one of the consequences of economic restructuring. Unemployment and underemployment especially affect youth, the long-term unemployed, older workers, the less skilled and women. The challenge for ESCWA countries is to adapt clusters of policies to the emerging realities of globalization, rapid technological changes, increase productivity and gain access to export markets.

Social integration

77. Based on ESCWA experience in local community development, where many field projects have been implemented in several ESCWA countries, the ESCWA secretariat developed an integral regional training programme on community development. This programme provides the opportunity to access a collection of documents on national community development experiences as well as field studies on activities designed to generate income to enhance the role of civil society organizations, on advent methods to support popular participation and the role of the informal sector, as well as other matters related to microcredit.

78. Moreover, ESCWA is addressing the issue of social integration by undertaking projects on integrating persons with disabilities. In Jordan, ESCWA established the first Arab regional computer training centre where blind persons are trained on the use of Braille computers for future employment and/or tertiary education.

79. In 2000, ESCWA launched a new project entitled "Promoting self-reliance with particular emphasis on employment: community-based rehabilitation in Bourj El Burajneh". The aim is to empower people with disabilities in their communities through training for sustainable livelihoods. The project is implemented through the cooperation of ESCWA, the Ministry of Social Affairs Centre for Social Services and Development, and a local NGO, thus emphasizing the partnership between the United Nations, civil society and Governments. It is mainly funded by the United Nations Voluntary Fund on Disability and the Swedish Government.

VII. International Conference on Population and Development (ICPD+5)

Economic Commission for Europe

80. The conclusions and the research areas adopted at the intergovernmental Regional Population Meeting, co-organized in December 1998 in Budapest by ECE, the Hungarian Central Statistical Office and the United Nations Population Fund and in cooperation with the Council of Europe as part of the ICPD+5 process continue to guide the Commission's population activities and its efforts at implementing the ICPD Programme of Action in the ECE region. The principal issues and policy challenges addressed during the Budapest meeting were (a) fertility, family and gender issues; (b) reproductive rights and sexual and reproductive health; (c) mortality and health; (d) population ageing; and (e) international migration. The conclusions of the meeting covered these five areas as well as new cooperation opportunities, in the field of population and development and in the field of population data collection and analysis in the region.

81. The above-mentioned research areas encouraged all actors involved in the population field to promote networking with a view to: (a) reinforcing the linkages of statistical activities, research, analysis, policy

formulation and operational programmes; (b) exchanging information, knowledge and experiences among themselves; and (c) creating new partnerships around specific issues and concerns in response to the major population challenges of the region.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

82. A high-level meeting was held in Bangkok from 24 to 27 March 1998 to review the regional implementation of the Programme of Action of the ICPD and the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development. This meeting underscored the need to convene the Fifth Asia and Pacific Population Conference. A project proposal to organize the Fifth Conference in 2002 has been submitted to UNFPA for funding. The Conference will provide a chance for ESCAP to monitor and evaluate the progress made, at the country and regional levels, towards the attainment of ICPD goals, to take stock of the progress made during the past decade and ascertain emerging issues and identify future directions for the population and reproductive health policies and programmes of the region.

83. ESCAP implemented various population activities in line with the recommendations of the Bali Declaration on Population and Sustainable Development and the Programme of Action of the ICPD. ESCAP's programme of work is focused on the conduct of collaborative research, the provision of technical assistance, the organization of training courses, workshops and seminars, and the dissemination of population data and information to member countries in the region.

84. ESCAP is undertaking several projects with UNFPA funding. One example is the project entitled "Compilation, packaging and regular dissemination of population information for advocacy purposes", through which ESCAP promotes (a) dissemination of population information through printed and electronic media; (b) development and wide availability of databases on the Internet; and (c) strengthening of Asia-Pacific POPIN network through capacity-building.

85. To improve the information base for the formulation, implementation, monitoring and evaluation of population and reproductive health policies and programmes, a project proposal entitled "Strengthening institutional and technical capacities for data-based planning and policy-making" was submitted to UNFPA for funding. To empower women within the context of reproductive health, a regional project proposal entitled "Development of programme strategies and modalities for dealing with violence against women" was also submitted to UNFPA for funding.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

86. During 2000 ECLAC continued to carry out its activities regarding population issues. In this regard the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre (CELADE) monitored fertility, mortality and migration trends in the region updating regularly databases on demographic trends and indicators. One of the outputs of this process was the preparation of new population estimates and projections for the countries of the region; such a task was carried out in connection with the technical assistance rendered to national statistical offices and other relevant institutions.

87. ECLAC through CELADE also updated its data bank on urbanization and spatial distribution of population providing inputs for analytical studies and projections. The ECLAC report to the regional conference for the review and appraisal of the implementation of the Habitat Agenda was largely based on studies derived from this data bank. The same is true for the chapter on spatial changes in a book published recently by ECLAC on the evaluation of social and economic progress and setbacks in Latin America and the Caribbean during the 1990s.

88. To contribute to an understanding of the complex links between population and development in the Latin American and Caribbean countries, ECLAC, through CELADE, issued two special publications in 2000. One of them is of a conceptual nature; after dealing with more interrelationships it identifies four crucial issues (human resources, social equity, environmental sustainability and governance), related to specific policy areas (employment, poverty, spatial distribution of the population, and human rights). The second, of an instrumental nature, shows the relevance of socio-demographic information and knowledge for the design and implementation of social policies; the main thrust of the document is to illustrate how population elements contribute both to an appropriate

identification of the beneficiaries of those policies and a selection of specific policy measures.

Economic Commission for Africa

89. The ECA secretariat participated in the Third General Assembly of the African Population Commission, which took place in Abuja, Nigeria, in May 1999. A major outcome of the Assembly was a joint ECA/OAU/ADB statement on population and development based on an assessment of African experiences in the implementation of the Dakar Ngor Declaration/International Conference on Population and Development Programme of Action, which was circulated during the special session of the General Assembly on ICPD+5 in July 1999.

90. Planned follow-up activities to the ICPD+5 for 2001 include the convening of the fourth meeting of the Follow-up Committee on the Declaration/ Programme of Action. The second meeting of the Working Group of the Declaration/Programme of Action was held in Dakar, Senegal, from 14 to 16 June 2000 to review the findings and recommendations of the ICPD+5 review process and suggested options for the 10-year review of the implementation of ICPD (ICPD+10). The meeting also decided that ICPD+10 in the Africa region would focus on five thematic areas: poverty, HIV/AIDS, youth, migration and gender.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

91. The Commission is developing a database with UNFPA on population policies in the Arab world. This exercise is textual and numerical in approach, whereby the population policies are obtained and analysed from national plans and programmes and demographic figures are obtained and also analysed for their use by the Commission in its work in demographic estimates and projections. Although this project relates to issues of population and development, it is part of an overall effort by ESCWA to monitor all social policies in the Arab region in an intersectoral approach.

VIII. Special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

92. ESCAP has been implementing several projects related to the prevention of HIV/AIDS among young people. It has developed a module on the relationship between sexual exploitation and HIV/AIDS, as part of the ESCAP human resources development course on psychosocial and medical services for sexually abused and sexually exploited children and youth. This module, already launched at the subregional level, is currently being used at the national level, in order to train health and social service providers. In June 2001, ESCAP in collaboration with several United Nations agencies, will convene the Third Asia-Pacific Intergovernmental Meeting on Human Resources Development for Youth. This meeting will be aimed at mainstreaming youth health issues into national policies and programmes, focusing on sexual and reproductive health, substance abuse and HIV/AIDS prevention.

93. In close collaboration with UNAIDS, ESCAP included an agenda item on HIV/AIDS for the fifty-seventh session of the Commission, held in April 2001, in preparation for the special session of the General Assembly on HIV/AIDS, to be held from 25 to 27 June 2001. On that occasion, a high-level panel discussion was also organized for the Commission in which prominent leaders from Africa and Asia, including a former President and a former Prime Minister, participated. The panel also included young people from the Asia and Pacific region who shared their experience of living with HIV/AIDS. Noting that the current prevalence rate could translate into huge numbers of people given the large population base in Asia and the Pacific, the Commission adopted a resolution aimed at strengthening the efforts of the countries in the region to reverse that trend.

Economic Commission for Africa

94. ECA will take the lead in addressing the development implications of HIV/AIDS as well as mobilizing leadership at all levels in the fight against the pandemic. To this end, and as part of the follow-up activities to the African Development Forum 2000, ECA plans to mainstream the issue of HIV/AIDS into ECA's work programme; incorporate issues relating to

HIV/AIDS into all major meetings and conferences; set up a mechanism for monitoring the implementation of the recommendations of ADF 2000 at the country level, including establishing indicators and benchmarks for monitoring the implementation of the African Consensus and Plan of Action.

95. Follow-up activities to ADF 2000 on HIV/AIDS will take place at the national, subregional, regional and international levels, and the process of identifying follow-up actions and mechanisms at the country level has already begun. Thirty African countries are planning national workshops with the aim of translating ADF recommendations into concrete programmes at the country level. ECA is assisting in these efforts in cooperation with United Nations Resident Coordinators and the UNAIDS Country Programme Advisers.

96. At the international level, the implementation of the African Consensus and Plan of Action will be undertaken within the framework of the International Partnership against AIDS in Africa (IPAA). ECA activities in this regard will focus on advocacy for the development of new international public goods (drugs/vaccines campaigns), using existing coordination mechanisms as a platform; emphasizing the link between AIDS and poverty reduction (through international instruments such as the Poverty Reduction Strategy Papers (PRSPs) process and the Highly Indebted Poor Countries Initiative); assisting African countries in integrating the HIV/AIDS dimension in economic and social policies by conducting country-specific research that will serve as a basis for policy-making; and mainstreaming HIV/AIDS in all development activities.

97. In addition, ECA is working on mainstreaming the outcome of ADF 2000 into the agenda of a number of upcoming special events on HIV/AIDS, such as the General Assembly special session on HIV/AIDS, which will take place in New York in June 2001; the OAU Summit of Heads of State and Government in Lusaka, Zambia, in July 2001; and the United Nations Summit for Children, scheduled for September 2001 in New York.

IX. Global Conference on the Sustainable Development of Small Island Developing States

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

98. ESCAP gives high priority to its 19 members and associate members from the Pacific subregion, five of which are least developed countries. These countries and territories face many development challenges. They rely very heavily on ODA, which is shrinking due to donor fatigue.

99. Technical assistance provided by ESCAP to Pacific island countries covers diverse areas such as economic and social development, trade and investment, environment and sustainable development, rural and urban development, statistics and transport and communications. This assistance is rendered from the Bangkok headquarters as well as from the ESCAP Pacific Operations Centre in Vanuatu and by the Statistical Institute for Asia and the Pacific in Tokyo, in the area of statistics.

100. Most of ESCAP's assistance to Pacific island countries is channelled through the Centre, which is currently staffed by six advisers, who fielded 53 advisory missions to 10 Pacific island countries in the year 2000, covering such diverse areas as corporate planning, strategic planning, social development, development planning, economic reforms, regional planning and youth policy formulation. The Centre also provided advice in areas of horticulture, development banking, youth policy, privatization, governance, food technology for six Pacific island countries in 2000.

101. ESCAP's Special Body on Pacific Island Developing Countries, which has met six times since its inception in 1995, has deliberated on several issues of relevance, including on trade and investment, development planning, youth and children's welfare issues and transport.

102. Given the limited resources, and to avoid duplication, Pacific Operations Centre in cooperation with other United Nations agencies and subregional organizations, has been assisting in the restructuring of several subregional agencies and has assisted Pacific island countries to prepare themselves to attend international conferences.

103. ESCAP also continues its work to enable Pacific island countries to benefit from the development experiences of their Asian counterparts under their economic and technical cooperation schemes. Under this scheme, six Pacific island countries benefited from training activities in the areas of private sector development, information technology management, poverty eradication, public sector management and income generation provided by the Governments of China, India, Malaysia and Singapore in 2000.

104. ESCAP established the Pacific Trust Fund in 1988 to assist Pacific island countries to attend the annual ESCAP sessions. The Fund has proved very useful in ensuring the attendance of some Pacific island countries, including the five LDCs at every Commission session since its inception.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

105. Among the mandates of the *ECLAC/Caribbean Development and Cooperation Committee (CDCC)* is the analysis of issues related to small island developing States. Much of the work programme in this respect comes directly from the Programme of Action for small island developing States, adopted at the Global Conference in 1994. At the beginning of the implementation of the Programme of Action, many of the programmes were directly concerned with matters of the environment, especially those having to do with climate change and land and water resources. More recently, however, there has been an increasing recognition of the need to deal with the socio-economic and human development issues relating to small island developing States. ECLAC/CDCC and the CARICOM secretariats also act jointly as the executing agency for the small island developing States of the Caribbean.

106. The ECLAC subregional headquarters for the Caribbean has also been very concerned with the development of databases, which act as a repository of knowledge and information for the development of policies and the analyses of issues relating to small island developing States and the environment. In this respect, two important activities of ECLAC include the updating and expansion of the Caribbean sustainable development databases to be hosted and mirrored on the small island developing States Information Network (SIDSNET) and other locations, and the updating and maintenance of the database on all projects and programmes in the Caribbean region related to small island developing States. This database can now be searched online.

X. World Summit on the Information Society

107. Following the ACC meeting held in New York on 27 and 28 October 2000, the Secretary-General of the International Telecommunication Union welcomed the proposal of the Executive Secretaries of the regional commissions to contribute substantively to the preparatory and follow-up processes for the World Summit on the Information Society, which is scheduled to take place in 2003. The Executive Secretaries also agreed to designate ECE to serve as the focal point of the commissions in the preparatory process for the Summit.

XI. Activities of the Commissions for other conferences and meetings relevant to their work

Second World Assembly on Ageing

Economic Commission for Europe

108. In order to promote synergies between the preparatory processes for the Second World Assembly on Ageing and for the ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing, to be held in Berlin in September 2002, the ECE secretariat is working in close cooperation with the Programme on Ageing of the Department of Economic and Social Affairs of the Secretariat, which acts as the secretariat for the World Assembly. As part of this cooperation, the ECE secretariat takes part in the work of the Technical Committee, which was established to assist the Secretary-General in the preparatory process for the World Assembly. The ECE secretariat staff also participates in inter-agency meetings for the World Assembly, which discuss, among other things, the modalities to ensure the contribution of United Nations agencies to the process of revision of the International Plan of Action on Ageing.

109. The ECE secretariat is collaborating on issues related to the preparations for the World Assembly on Ageing with the World Health Organization, the International Labour Office and the International Social Security Association, both within the framework

of the Geneva International Network on Ageing and through various other forums (e.g., the involvement of experts from these organizations in the work of the expert seminars organized as part of the preparatory process for the ECE Ministerial Conference on Ageing).

110. ECE's preparation for the regional Conference, to be held in Berlin in 2002, envisages (a) a seminar to be held to identify the issues and policy challenges related to ageing that are of particular importance to the ECE region; (b) proposals made on that basis by the ECE Executive Secretary to ECE member States on the main themes and issues to be addressed by the Conference; (c) the approval of the main themes of the Conference by an ad hoc informal meeting of the Commission; (d) subsequent expert seminars to address each of these themes from a substantive point of view; (e) the preparation during the first half of 2002 by the secretariat of a draft of the regional implementation strategy for the revised International Plan of Action on Ageing; (f) the further development and amendment of the draft by an open-ended working group in June 2002. The steps envisaged in points (a) to (c) above have taken place.

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

111. With regard to ageing-related issues, the secretariat initiated regional preparations for the Second World Assembly on Ageing (Madrid, 2002). The Guidelines on the Implementation of the Macau Plan of Action on Ageing for Asia and the Pacific was endorsed by Governments in the region in June 2000. The ESCAP secretariat has conducted a regional survey on national policies on ageing and implementation of the Macau Plan of Action. Preparations are under way for the regional preparatory consultation for the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

112. ECLAC has carried out a number of activities in preparation for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, the most important of which was the Latin American and Caribbean Symposium on Older Persons (Santiago, Chile, 8-10 September 1999), organized in collaboration with UNFPA and PAHO. In November 2000, ECLAC hosted and sponsored the International Seminar on Older Persons: social integration, cultural change and quality of life, organized by the Latin American and Caribbean Network of Programmes for Older Persons. ECLAC will be sponsoring another seminar organized by this network, to be held in Lima at the end of May 2001, in which the organizations members of the Network of Programmes expect to reach a common position regarding the Second World Assembly on Ageing.

113. The 1999-2000 edition of the ECLAC *Social Panorama of Latin America* (LC/G.2068), includes a chapter on older adults, which examines issues relating to their well-being: the living arrangements arising in response to the ageing of the population; the coverage provided by social security systems, which are the main source of income for older adults; the participation of older adults in the labour force and the impact this has on income distribution; and the poverty rates for the households in which they live.

114. ECLAC is also preparing a document on the sources of vulnerability affecting the elder population, to be used as a conceptual framework for policy-making. The document aims at identifying common patterns, best practices and operational weaknesses deriving from conceptual or institutional factors. Additionally, ECLAC and UNFPA have agreed to make a joint presentation at an Ibero-American Preparatory Meeting for the Second World Assembly on Ageing, to take place in Santa Cruz de la Sierra, Bolivia, in November 2001.

Economic Commission for Africa

115. ECA organized an expert group meeting on the issues relevant to the World Assembly on Ageing, which was held in Addis Ababa in May 2000.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

116. A regional meeting on ageing related issues was organized by ESCWA and took place in Beirut on 26 February 2001.

World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance

Economic and Social Commission for Asia and the Pacific

117. As follow-up to a memorandum of understanding signed between the two organizations, ESCAP collaborated with the Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights in organizing the Asia-Pacific seminar of experts in preparation for the World Conference against Racism: migrants and trafficking in persons, with particular reference to women and children, held at Bangkok, in September 2000.

118. In April 2001, ESCAP completed the work of a project to promote the right to development in the Asia and Pacific region through a series of 12 animation and 52 television spots. The project was funded by the Government of Norway.

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

119. ECLAC assisted OHCHR in the organization of the subregional activities in preparation for the World Conference against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance. OHCHR invited a staff member of ECLAC, Social Development Division, to present a document at the Regional Expert Seminar (Santiago, Chile, 25-27 October 2000). ECLAC, therefore, not only hosted the Expert Seminar, but was able to make a substantive contribution to the regional preparatory process with the document entitled "Ethno-racial Discrimination and Xenophobia in Latin America and the Caribbean".

120. ECLAC also collaborated with both the Government of Chile and the OHCHR in the organization of the Preparatory Conference of the Americas against Racism, Racial Discrimination, Xenophobia and Related Forms of Intolerance, held in Santiago, Chile, from 5 to 7 December 2000. In addition, ECLAC and the OHCHR agreed to strengthen their cooperation for the further integration of the human rights dimension in the programmes carried out by ECLAC in Latin America and Caribbean. For this purpose, they signed a Memorandum of Intent, on 5 December 2000.

121. ECLAC and the OHCHR will collaborate in the dissemination of information and in the organization of human rights training in the region, bearing in mind the indivisibility of all human rights and the need to create national capacities for the promotion and protection of all human rights. Both institutions agreed to have regular consultations and an exchange of information, cooperate in studies and research in the area of sustainable human development adopting an integrated approach, with a view to, inter alia, increasing support to the work of the thematic rapporteurs of the Commission on Human Rights with economic and social mandates. They also agreed to collaborate in the elaboration and implementation of the regional strategy of the OHCHR for technical cooperation in the region. In this context, ECLAC will collaborate with the OHCHR in the planning and organization of regional workshops on the elaboration of strategies for the promotion of economic, social and cultural rights, to be carried out in the context of the regional framework for technical cooperation (Quito Framework), adopted by the countries of Latin America and Caribbean at the regional workshop to discuss the question of national action plans for human rights for the region (Quito, 29 November-1 December 1999).

Fourth World Youth Forum

Economic Commission for Latin America and the Caribbean

122. At the twenty-eighth session of the Commission, held in Mexico in April 2000, the ECLAC secretariat submitted a document entitled "Youth, population and development in Latin America and the Caribbean" (LC/L.1339). The Commission welcomed the document and asked the Latin American and Caribbean Demographic Centre, Population Division of ECLAC, to study the subject in greater depth with a view to presenting a revised version of the document to the Tenth Ibero-American Summit of Heads of State and Government. Accordingly, ECLAC prepared a publication on youth, population and development: problems, opportunities and challenges (LC/G.2113-P), which presents a comprehensive picture of the complex situation facing Latin American and Caribbean youth, their socio-demographic behaviour and the policy and institutional challenges. A summary of this publication was presented at the Panama Summit of Heads of State and Government of Ibero-America (November 2000).

123. ECLAC also sponsored and actively participated in the second meeting of the Latin American and Caribbean Youth Forum (Panama, July 2000), which reviewed the implementation in the region of the World Programme of Action on Youth adopted by the General Assembly and the Programme of Action on Youth adopted by Ibero-American countries in Braga, Portugal. In addition, ECLAC strengthened its collaboration with the main regional intergovernmental bodies on these matters, the Ibero-American Youth Organization. Both institutions have agreed to carry out several joint activities and have formulated a project for setting up an observatory of policies towards youth, for whose implementation funds are currently being sought.

Economic and Social Commission for Western Asia

124. Together with UNICEF, ESCWA held a symposium on follow-up to the World Summit for Children held from 12 to 16 March 2001.

Notes

[1] *Official Records of the Economic and Social Council, 2000, Supplement No. 9* (E/2000/29), chap. I, sect. B.